

I want to congratulate him on this well-deserved accomplishment and express my personal gratitude for his tireless commitment to the people of Huntington Beach and Southern California. I wish him and his family all the best as they begin this new undertaking.

RECOGNIZING THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF FAIRFAX PETS ON WHEELS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 22, 2022

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 35th Anniversary of the Fairfax Pets on Wheels program. This program aims to bring joy to our long term assisted living residents through therapy pet visits.

Since 1987, all-volunteer Fairfax Pets on Wheels (FPOW) has been licking loneliness by carrying out their mission to provide companionship and improved quality of life to residents of Fairfax area nursing homes and assisted living facilities through regular pet visitation by trained volunteers and their approved pets.

Sponsored by the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging and approved by the American Kennel Club as a therapy dog group, FPOW's trained people and pet teams share the power of the human-animal bond through thousands of hours of pet therapy visits every year. They have facilitated pet visitations through a network of more than 300 volunteers, and currently provide visitation to residents in ten facilities. Their dedicated volunteers donated over 8,000 hours of pet visitation just last year.

Pet visitation is proven to have a calming effect. Regular visits by volunteer and pet teams help reduce anxiety, relieve depression, lower blood pressure, encourage communication, and increase socialization. Touching animals helps chase away loneliness and withdrawal and encourages a meaningful connection to happier times.

Throughout the pandemic, many of us have had to isolate to keep our communities safe, and this left many older adults without social interaction or company. We were seeing this take a toll on the mental and physical health of our senior population as they were forced to quarantine for weeks on end. As we are starting to return to normalcy, the visits from furry friends are a great way for our elderly community to lift their spirits.

FPOW volunteers and their pet partners make a difference every day by sharing the unconditional love of a pet to help improve someone's life. In return, human volunteers get to spend more time with their pets and make new friends.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending the Fairfax Pets on Wheels program. Volunteers of this organization dedicate themselves to the senior residents of Fairfax County make sure that all residents, including some of the most vulnerable in our society, are being looked out for. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to this organization for their work to support our aging adults in this community.

HONORING MICHELE GARGIULO'S CONGRESSIONAL SERVICE

HON. STEVEN M. PALAZZO

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 22, 2022

Mr. PALAZZO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of my key staff members, Michele Gargiulo. In 2011, I hired Michele to assist in opening my district office in Gulfport, Mississippi. As a military veteran, she performed constituent services specializing in military and veterans' issues. Because of her strong work ethic and dedication to serving the constituents of Mississippi's 4th Congressional District, she was entrusted with the role of Director of Constituent Services in 2012 and was promoted to District Director in 2017, serving as such for five years.

Michele grew up in Huntington Beach, California, and graduated from San Diego State University, receiving her bachelor's degree in Political Science and a Commission as an Active-Duty U.S. Army Transportation Officer. While stationed in Stuttgart, Germany, she met her husband, Frederick Gargiulo. They married in 1988, and in 1992, Michele left the military as a Captain in the Louisiana National Guard. For the next 25 years, she focused on supporting military families and raising her three children—Danielle, Blaise, and Sydney. During this time, she ran a transition center for underserved teenagers in a local high school and oversaw family support groups for military families with service members that were forward deployed.

Michele's accomplishments as a congressional staffer are both numerous and outstanding. Of note, she ensured several Vietnam War veterans received the Purple Heart medals they had earned in combat, she worked with key stakeholders throughout the district to ensure their concerns were heard and their needs were met, and she oversaw the successful resolution of over 60,000 constituent service requests. Beyond her work, Michele is a beloved mother, wife, sister, and grandmother—and in all of those roles, she truly excels. Additionally, she served as the President of the Board of Directors for CASA of Harrison County, was awarded the Yellow Rose of Texas by President George W. Bush and is an avid long-distance runner and tennis player.

The signature block on Michele's email includes a phrase in Latin that means "getting better, faster," and that epitomizes Michele's impact as a District Director. She led, mentored, and managed the district staff through multiple sessions of Congress, always intending to improve the team so that we could better serve the people of Mississippi's 4th Congressional District. She is relentless in her work ethic, dedicated to her cause, and positively impacts everyone she meets. For over a decade, Michele's organizational skills and tireless effort have enabled our staff to achieve real and lasting results for the people of Mississippi.

I thank Michele.

RECOGNIZING AMBASSADOR DANIEL MULHALL

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 22, 2022

Mr. NEAL. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the extraordinary work of Daniel Mulhall during his 5 year tenure (2017–2022) as Ambassador of Ireland to the United States of America. Ambassador Mulhall enhanced the already positive relationship between our two nations. He was a respected voice on important policy issues but also wove in the cultural aspects often referencing art, poetry and music in discussions and writings.

Ambassador Mulhall served during a critical time for both our nations. In the United States, he witnessed 2 impactful elections, experienced a global pandemic, met with elected officials on both sides of the aisle about cultural and policy issues and welcomed us into his home for celebrations and remembrances. He amplified our economic ties with Ireland citing our investment and trade relationship.

He framed the impact of Brexit on Ireland and the need for the Northern Ireland Protocol to navigate it. And he emphasized the importance to protect and celebrate the Good Friday Agreement as its 25th anniversary approaches.

I enjoyed our work together in my capacity as Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Co-Chair of the Congressional Friends of Ireland and as Congressman representing the First Congressional District of Massachusetts that is home to one of the largest Irish American communities in the nation.

Not a meeting or conversation would go by without some relevant insight about how politics or policies of the day had an impact on culture in both our nations.

As he begins the next chapter of his career, I know he will continue to expand his quest for knowledge and share his keen interest and wisdom with those forging a path to foreign service. He also will provide the space for students to deepen their knowledge about Ireland.

Diplomacy is the balance of creativity and storytelling. Ireland has a story to tell, and Ambassador Mulhall did it with grace and precision. That is best described in the book *All Strangers Here: 100 Years of Personal Writing from the Irish Foreign Service*. It was co-edited by Angela Byrne, Ragnar Deeney Almquist and Helena Nolan. I encourage my colleagues to read the following excerpts. The first is an essay by Dan Mulhall entitled, "A New Day Dawning" about a visit from Queen Victoria to Dublin. The second is a poem by Eavan Boland (commissioned by current Ambassador of Ireland to the United States of America, Geraldine Byrne Nason), "Our Future Will Become the Past of Other Women."

A NEW DAY DAWNING (extract)

Daniel Mulhall

Perched on top of Killiney Hill overlooking Dublin Bay, there is an eighteenth-century obelisk that is visible from many of the southern suburbs of Dublin. This stark monument, erected in 1742 as part of a famine relief scheme, stands at the highest point of a public park that carries in its name a reminder of Ireland as it was the last time a century came to a close. In 1900 this amenity was known as Victoria Park, and